



ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL

Bryan Estrada Gonzalez

Valentina Vasquez Florez

**UNIVERSIDAD TECNOLÓGICA DE PEREIRA
FACULTAD DE BELLAS ARTES Y HUMANIDADES
LICENCIATURA EN BILINGÜISMO
CON ÉNFASIS EN INGLÉS
2017**

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL

*A classroom project presented as one of the requirements
to receive the undergraduate degree
Of
“Licenciado en Bilingüismo
Con Énfasis en Inglés”*

Project Assessor:

Dra. Rosa Maria Guilleumas García

Contents

1-Justification	6
2-Objectives	10
2.1 Learning Objectives.....	10
2.2 Teaching Objectives.....	10
3-Conceptual Framework	11
3.1 Participation	12
3.2 How to conceive participation in the EFL context.....	12
3.3 Elicitation techniques.....	13
3.4 The advantages and disadvantages of eliciting in the EFL classrooms.....	14
4-Lit Review.....	16
5-Methodology.....	19
5.1 Context and Participants.....	19
5.2 Instructional Design.....	20
5.3 Implementation	21
5.4 Assessment	24
5.5 Reflection	25
6-Reflective Stage	27
6.1 Professional growth	27
6.1.1 Strengths	27
6.1.2 Challenges.....	30
6.2 Students' responses.....	32
6.2.1 Strengths	32
6.2.2 Challenges.....	33
6.3 Linguistic Outcomes	34
6.3.1 Strengths	34
6.3.2 Challenges.....	36
7-Conclusion	38
8-References.....	39

ABSTRACT

This document describes the planning, execution and results of the classroom project that had as a purpose to evidence the impact of implementing Elicitation Techniques as a mean to make students participate during EFL Lessons. This project emerged from the need to lead students to play an active role during English classes given the fact that, from personal teaching experiences, it has been observed that the lack of participation among the students, affects the normal development of the lessons. Planning, selecting materials and the use of technology were essential resources to conduct the implementation with 8th graders at the institución educativa Suroriental in Pereira. To collect data, observations were carried out during every session in order to identify students' responses in terms of attitudes and linguistic outcomes. In addition, teaching journals were used to support the collected data. The results showed that Elicitation Techniques did not work by themselves, thus there is strict need of relation among the content selected for the lesson and student's daily life.

RESUMEN

Este documento describe la planificación, ejecución y resultados del proyecto del aula que tuvo como propósito evidenciar el impacto de la implementación de técnicas de elicitación como un medio para hacer que los estudiantes participen durante las clases de inglés como lengua extranjera. Este proyecto surgió de la necesidad de guiar a los estudiantes a desempeñar un papel activo durante las clases de inglés dado que, a partir de las experiencias de enseñanza personal, se ha observado que la falta de participación entre los estudiantes afecta el desarrollo normal de las clases. La planificación, selección de materiales y el uso de la tecnología fueron recursos esenciales para llevar a cabo la implementación con los alumnos de 8° grado de la institución educativa Suroriental de Pereira. Para recopilar datos, se llevaron a cabo observaciones durante cada sesión con el fin de identificar las respuestas de los estudiantes en términos de actitudes y producción lingüística. Además, el diario de enseñanza se utilizó para respaldar los datos recopilados. Los resultados mostraron que las Técnicas de elicitación no funcionaban por sí solas, por lo que existe una estricta necesidad de relacionar el contenido seleccionado para la lección con la vida diaria del alumno.

1-Justification

‘Oral participation is the cognitive and socio-linguistic communication developed in the classroom interaction considering the nature and conditions of speech’, (Carter and Nunan, 2001).

Speaking plays an important role in English teaching environments. Those who attempt to become proficient in English as a foreign language classroom should be actively engaged in class oral activities. However, participation is a problem for many students. Based on theory, research studies, and personal experiences while being an EFL student and teacher, it has been identified that there are many factors involved in oral production and its success or its failure. Experts have identified nervousness, anxiety, lack of vocabulary or lack of self-confidence as affecting factors. For instance the fear of speaking in public is related with anxiety and can be defined by Horwitz et al, (1986, p.125) as the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system, it includes signs such as general avoidance that is related to “forgetting” the answer, showing carelessness, cutting class, arriving late, arriving unprepared, low levels of verbal production, lack of volunteering in class, and apparent inability to answer even the simplest of questions. Other signs which might reflect language anxiety, depending on the culture, include over studying, perfectionism, social avoidance, conversational withdrawal, lack of eye contact, hostility, monosyllabic or noncommittal responses, image protection or masking behaviors (exaggerated smiling, laughing, nodding, joking) failing to interrupt when it would be natural to do so, excessive competitiveness and self-criticism, and so this leads the students to feel no self-confidence. Comparable to such theory about anxiety and the affecting factors impulsing the lack of participation in English language classes, in Colombia, Mendoza (2007) conducted a study in

a public high school with 6th grade students who showed symptoms of anxiety in specific situations as conversations, role plays and oral participation or any other oral activity. Findings revealed that anxiety is one of the factors affecting students' oral participation and is caused by internal and external factors. Internal factors such as self-esteem, motivation, introversion and extroversion, lack of vocabulary, beliefs, ability to take risk; and external factors such as methodology and interaction. The findings concluded that anxiety terribly affects oral competences of language students during any kind of instruction, and even more in English classes. This piece of work also revealed that oral presentations and participation in front of large audiences and the teacher were the communicative activity which aroused the most anxiety. From a personal perspective, it is noted that the reason why the students do not participate actively in English classes is due to the fact that they feel they know very little about the language and so the lack of knowledge of vocabulary does not make them competent in English, hence they do not participate when it is required. The lack of vocabulary or language knowledge is what interrupts the success of Oral participation in EFL; it produces nervousness at the time of doing any oral presentation, thus, unwillingness starts taking part of their performance in the classes. Another outstanding aspect of lack of participation according to real life and lived experiences, is that it turns out at the very beginning difficult for the students to participate of discussions that are not related to their context, but it is noticeable that they do want to learn about the world in general, not only their setting. It is the challenge of the teachers then to propose ideas in which the local setting can be combined with the globalization process or world's setting.

In this age, the world requires people to be part of the nowadays globalized world. In that sense, there is a need of training people in a foreign language in order for them to be part of this

international context. As a response to it, the national education minister of Colombia (M.E.N), adopted the bilingual education system to aim that “Colombian citizens will be able to communicate through English with internationally comparable standards. This will contribute to the insertion of the country in the processes of universal communication, the global economy and cultural openness” (M.E.N. presentation, 2006). According to García (2009) and Romaine (1989) the term bilingual education refers to either a program or approach in which two languages are used as means of instruction (Ovando et al (2003), García (2009) provides a better understanding of what bilingual education is. She claims that bilingual programs provide inclusive education in which students are exposed to both languages, the native and the target one, giving them the chance to comprehend languages and different cultures. In order to encourage the strengthening of a foreign language, the MEN established the National Program of Bilingualism in 2004, whose main objective is to promote the learning of English as well as the improvement of the quality of teaching. However, as we have seen throughout Colombian Education history, despite the existence of this program, the challenges facing the implementation of those have led to fall through. An evidence of such is the fact that in Colombia, the 90% of the students do not exceed the corresponding level to that of a basic user (A-, A1, A2) stated by the Common European Framework of Reference. In that order of ideas, to address the gap it is recommended that the policies guided to improve the level of English in Colombia rather concentrate in instructing teachers. Instructions in the English Area should be aware of the many strategies and tools created to ease the Learning process of students. Examples of those are the Basic Learning Rights (or DBAs) which identify knowledge and skills to be acquired and developed by all students from 6th grade until 11th. Its importance lies in their proposition of fundamental elements for the construction of learning in each school year so

that, as a result of this process, learners reach the goals set out in the “Estándares Básicos de Competencias” on a mastery level of English (B1) when culminating 11th grade. The DBAs support the development of curricular proposal integrated with the institutional educational projects (or PEI). This serves as a reference that will allow teachers to know if learners are achieving the expected learning results and thus be able to define permanent improvement actions. In support of DBAs, the Ministry of Education presents a suggested curriculum proposal for English (or Currículo sugerido de Inglés) that allows these rights to be materialized in Educational Institutions and their classrooms. Based on personal experiences, there is a need for teachers to make students become aware of the importance of learning English and playing an active role into the classroom in order to participate of the activities proposed by the facilitator and decrease the lack of participation. Nonetheless, the “what should be done” not only backs in the need of instructing teachers to recognize the strategies provided to improve oral participation in this instance, tools, methodologies, contents, or curriculums.

The implementation of this project will be carried out within five sessions in which the use of each elicitation technique will be designated per each session. This project seeks to increase the student's' oral participation in EFL classroom, in the sense that, this techniques provide students with enough input before to be exposed to a speech. Also, the project aims to provide teachers with effective techniques to lead students to produce language and communicate each other.

2-Objectives

2.1 Learning Objectives

- To observe the levels of participation in EFL classrooms.
- To recognize elicitation techniques to ease participation in EFL classrooms.

2.2 Teaching Objectives

- To report the effects of elicitation techniques on students' participation.
- To provide students with elicitation techniques to use them in communicative activities.

3-Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a better understanding of the current classroom project by defining three essential concepts explained by theorists and experts on the field of language teaching, these definitions will straightforward the development of the process of “Elicitation techniques focusing on participation in EFL.” To begin with, the concept of Oral participation will be defined as the active role of the learner within an educational setting when cooperating actively during the development of the lessons. Next in order, elicitation which refers to the essential technique used by teachers to exchange information with the learners will be pointed out. Furthermore speaking will be explained as the act of producing and understanding verbal meaning which is generated immediately in real time situations.

These notions will provide the theoretical foundations to carry out the project. The notion of participation will be described taking into consideration what The Peace Corps (1989), Smith (2007), and Heyman and Sailors (2011) state. The term Elicitation will be built on the British Council views (2009) and the applied linguistics dictionary definition. Speaking will be mentioned according to the conceptions of Brown, (1994), Burns and Joyce (1997) and Halliday, (1989). When culminating with the theoretical definitions by each author, an own perception will be brought up by the participants of the current classroom project.

3.1 Participation

Participation seems to be one of the greatest challenges teachers face in EFL and ESL classrooms since student's lack of participation affects negatively the normal development of the lessons. Authors have addressed the importance of participation in both EFL and English as second language (ESL) classrooms.

As stated in a document by the Peace Corps (1989), participation is inextricably related to activities inasmuch as students' participation increases if the selected activities involve them. Similarly and complementing the peace corps' definition, Smith (2007) points out the concept of Participation in learning projects and programmes as the motives for engagement in learning projects are often mixed and can operate at a number of levels. As well as Heyman and Sailors (2011) points out classroom participation as a form of active learning in which students publicly discuss the course material (2011:605). Thus, participation means that teachers should implement not only talk but also all other types of activities that engage students and guide them through a safety path to have an active role in the classroom.

3.2 How to conceive participation in the EFL context

These definitions lead us to think about the type of activities teachers should include in their lessons in order to guide students through a path in which they can have active roles participating in the classroom activities. Hollander (2002) discusses the need to present participation as a collective responsibility of the class rather than just an individual responsibility. In order to facilitate a conversation where connections are made, students need to view their participation as a contribution to a shared experience. Asking students to respond to a peer's response helps to facilitate a conversation. As well, positively reinforcing such

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

13

contributions builds this sense of collectivism. Similarly to these, Hollander (2002) points out that teachers should devise activities that elicit participation. Discussion-based activities such as case-study analyses, role playing, and jigsaws encourage students to talk with one another and with the instructor. To be effective, however, they typically require clear instructions, including timelines. With one-on-one exchanges, you can adopt a deep questioning approach, probing students about the reasoning behind their responses, sometimes doing so repeatedly to achieve greater depth (“Yes, but why do you think that?”)

These activities are essential in EFL and ESL classroom to exchange information among teacher-students, students-teacher and students-students. Thus, these activities are part of teacher’s elicitation techniques.

3.3 Elicitation techniques

Elicitation is key in the teaching-learning exercise due to the fact that it facilitates the trade-off of information between students and teachers in order to ease the communication and promotes actively participation in the classroom. In other words, it is a term which describes a range of techniques that enable the teacher to get learners to provide information rather than giving it to them. According to the British Council (2009) eliciting is a technique used to ask learners to come up with vocabulary and language forms and rules, and to brainstorm a topic at the start of a skills lesson. Similarly to British Council’s definition, the applied linguistics dictionary defines elicitation as any technique or procedure that is designed to get a person to actively produce speech or writing, for example asking someone to describe a picture, tell a story, or finish an incomplete sentence. Thus, elicitation involves the use of activities and

procedures so that teachers can use to provide students with opportunities to exchange meaning with the teacher.

3.4 The advantages and disadvantages of eliciting in the EFL classrooms

Some of the most important aspects to highlight are that elicitation has several advantages such as: First, keep the students alert, this can be done by asking randomly to any student. They should be focus in order to answer any possible question from the teacher. Second, eliciting helps you realize if the students are listening and understanding or not: Asking key questions about the topic. For instance: Why do you think is important to preserve the water? Third, eliciting helps you find out what they already know: By starting with easy questions and working towards more difficult ones. And finally, elicitation can mean more student talking time (STT)/ cut down on teacher talking time (TTT): The fact that students responses are often in oral way, means that they are speaking more often than they would be if they just listening to an explanation by the teacher.

As any other process, it is important to mention that elicitation has some detriments such as: First, eliciting can be time consuming: Sometimes explanations can take a lot of time in this way, instead of simply provide the meaning. Second, one student can dominate answering your elicitation questions: There will be always at least one or two students that will want to answer everything (this depends on learners learning style). Third, eliciting can be met by silence: This could mean that students do not know the answer.

Based on this information, elicitation seeks to provoke the students to produce language by activating previous schemata and as a result increase speaking skills in the classroom.

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

15

To conclude, the concepts and the definitions indicated in the conceptual framework previously elaborated are of extremely importance for our project due to the fact that they are the pillar or the basic notions that compose our common purpose, which is promoting participation in EFL/ESL classrooms. Participation, located in the first place of level of importance, pilots what we want to approach and that is, making students actively participate in classes. Elicitation in second place which would be the technique implemented to foster participation and the method to exchange information among the participants. To sum up, in this piece of work a wide notion of what the classroom project Elicitation techniques focusing on participation in EFL classrooms seeks was revealed. All in all, it proposes increase and enhances the levels of participation in EFL classrooms by using a variety of activities which will be held primarily based on elicitation techniques and communicative related purposes. The implementation of this project will be conducted at the Institución educativa Suroriental which is located in the neighborhood of Boston in Pereira Risaralda, Colombia. It will be held by conducting five sessions in which will be developed a set of activities to promote oral participation in the classroom.

4-Lit Review

This paper aims to promote effective elicitation techniques to foster participation in EFL classrooms in a Colombian context. The following studies provide information about observation and description of the low levels of participation during speaking activities and its relation with introverted fifth graders at a public school in Pereira. Furthermore, point out factors that affect oral participation in the students of sixth grade at a private school in Sahagún, Cordoba. It is important to highlight that the studies have been carried out in our Colombian context.

The first study was conducted by Liris Lafont Mendoza (2007) “the study that affects oral participation in students of 6th Grade at Maria Auxiliadora school in Sahagún Córdoba”. The purpose of the study was to first, identify the most relevant factors that influence the Oral participation of the young 6th graders from 10 to 12 years old in Maria Auxiliadora Institution. Second, it aimed to determine the types of activities that ease and difficult the performance of the students when participating in class. Third, recognize the characteristics of Anxiety among the learners in order to determine if indeed it affected the actively or inactively participation. Finally, to analyze students’ behavior with the desire to find out negative or positive attitudes towards English as a Foreign Language. The Data collection method was primarily based on elicitation techniques; that is to say that in order to give validity the instruments used to collect all information required were Observations, questionnaires, interviews, and tests. Moreover, to deeper understand the nature of their attitude, a “tradition Method” was implemented as well. The study is described as Action Research, and the results were defined as purely qualitative. In the findings, students were exposed to questionnaires, interviews, observations, and tests which all together let the researcher to point out that the majority (80%) of the students are willing to be

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

17

involved in oral activities or conversation. Students feel very nervous when they are asked to make Oral presentations; they do not feel well with dramatizations, so that is a key factor of de motivation. They feel comfortable reading texts or stories in front of their classmates and love conversations. Finally, students feel highly motivated to participate in games, talks about videos, movies and songs, pair work and repetition helps them ease their learning process, hence their participation.

Comparable with this piece of work, the researchers John Ross Stevens Riess, Hilda Nery Lasso Jimenez and Jonathan Quintero Rincon conducted a study in a public school in Pereira in 2012. All of them were students from the licenciatura program. The educational institution where this investigation took place is called “el pueblito”. This primary school has an agreement of bilingualism with the Universidad tecnológica de Pereira. The study shows that the reason of this investigation was to observe and describe the low levels of oral participation during speaking activities and its relation with introverted fifth graders at a public school of Pereira. In addition, the current study points out the role of personality in relation with speaking activities in EFL classroom. Furthermore, this qualitative study was focused on two introverted students and two extroverted students with the objective to observe and analyze the impact of different speaking activities and its relation to their personality.

The data collection methods used during this investigation was interviews, observations and journals. During the analysis of the data collected, researchers reported: First, the implementation of pre-speaking activities using hands-on activities increased the confidence level of students to participate during speaking exercises. Second, the use of cooperative language learning activities such as vocabulary contests facilitated and promoted considerably

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

18

the participation among EFL students. Third, pedagogical strategies such as the use of contextualized material (materials which are strongly related with the everyday life context of the students like popular cartoon characters) in the speaking activities inside the EFL classroom, motivated and incremented oral participation among the introverted personalities. Finally, using gestures and giving clear instructions during the lesson to increase speaking participation.

To conclude, the studies included in this paper both show empathy to what needs to be conducted or implemented in any EFL classroom in order to enhance and promote actively participation among the students. One of the most important aspects highlighted in the studies is the adequate selection of types of activities for the students to voluntarily engage in any conversational task proposed by the teachers. Secondly, the importance of the utilization of pedagogical strategies as using contextualized materials like real life discussions, songs, videos or movies which might be of their interest and can give them a purpose to talk, discuss or simply share, in that way those tools might reinforce their cooperation and participation in the classroom. Finally, on both studies, the importance of motivation and affective factors can be observed and analyzed as the most relevant factors to foster participation in EFL classrooms.

5-Methodology

5.1 Context and Participants

The present classroom project will be developed at the Institución educativa Suroriental in Boston, Pereira Risaralda, Colombia. The school is a public institution that counts with 1.040 students of ages from 5 years old until 17 years old and who range between strata 1 to strata 3. The students are divided in a number of 40 each classroom among all classrooms. The journey is called “Jornada Unica” which basically means starting the school day at 6:30 AM until 12:40 PM, for both primary and secondary learners. The participants of the project are 36 7th graders who age between 13th and 14th years old. In the institution there are also 13 teachers in total for all areas from which 3 belong to the English Language teaching area. All facilitators in the English area have a bachelor degree accomplished in different universities from Colombia.

The first of them graduated from the Teaching of English Program at Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, Risaralda, Colombia and who is the in-service teacher of the group selected to implement the project. The second, licentiate in Lenguas Extranjeras program at Universidad Del Valle, Valle del Cauca, Colombia, and the third one, have a bachelor degree in Lenguas Modernas from Universidad de Caldas, Caldas Colombia. The school also has the Proyecto Educativo Institucional which stands for the organizing principles of the Colombian educational institutions, that captures the theoretical framework under which pedagogical objectives arise; there we can find the "Vision" of the institution, the proposal for the future, or the look towards the horizon.

5.2 Instructional Design

The classroom project is focus on participation in EFL classrooms throughout the implementation of elicitation techniques. Commonly, eliciting is used to ask learners to come up with vocabulary, grammar, or ideas. For teachers, elicitation provides key information about what the learners know or do not know, and therefore a starting point for lesson planning. The project will implement the backward approach proposed by Wiggins & McTighe which suggests that learning experiences should be planned with the final assessment in mind. One starts with the end - the desired results (goals or standards) - and then derives the curriculum from the evidence of learning (performances) called for by the standard and the teaching needed to equip students to perform' (Wiggins and McTighe, 2000, page 8). Having the backward approach already defined and stated before, elicitation techniques will be carried out in the sessions by means of developing lesson planning based on the Presentation, Practice and Production (P.P.P) model defined by Jeremy Harmer as a method that is widely used in teaching of simple language at lower levels. The first stage is the **presentation** of an aspect of language in a context that students are familiar with. The second stage is **practice**, where students will be given an activity that gives them plenty of opportunities to practice the new aspect of language and become familiar with it whilst receiving limited and appropriate assistance from the teacher. And the third stage is **production** where the students will use the language in context, in an activity set up by the teacher who will be giving minimal assistance.

5.3 Implementation

The classroom project was conducted within 5 sessions, each of them designated to one elicitation technique. Those Elicitation techniques were conducted with the aim of producing in 8th graders a positive impact when participating in English classes that were carried out at Institución educativa Suroriental; the purpose was to make them participate actively along the development of the project within the 5 sessions. Each session lasted 55 minutes.

The first technique was ‘Brainstorming’ which helped students to come up with ideas in a short period of time, and so they could work in groups or together as a class to think of associations related to the topic of the session. This technique was implemented in the first session by requesting students to provide ideas regarding the topic of the lesson. At the beginning of the session, the teacher showed on the TV some slides that contained the lyrics of a ‘Song. After that the teacher started asking questions to the students about what they believed the specific vocabulary of the song was about. Once students made their guesses, they gave their opinion of the lyrics and they provided through brainstorming their thoughts, and imagined those were part of a song, the teacher asked them in the next slide:

‘What is a Song?’

When they gave their own definition or translation of what a song means, the teacher provided them with the most basic and technical definition of ‘What a song is’

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

22

After the definition of the word ‘song’, the teacher continued to show the students the next slide in which they were asked about the uses of a song, or the reason why people sing. (That is a great activity to have students brainstorm their ideas orally in this case, and organize their thoughts.)

Questions such as these were asked:

- 1. What can we do with a Song?*
- 2. What do we sing for?*
- 3. What kind of songs do you like?*
- 4. What is your favorite Song?*

The second technique was about “Spider Diagrams/ Mind Maps”. Brainstorming can also be done in a more organized manner with words being added to categories and subcategories like the branches and twigs of a tree. For instance, after presenting a specific topic through a mind map of certain vocabulary, the teacher can then point to the place where the word that is required to be elicited would be if it was on that mind map, using other elicitation methods to help them work out which of the possibilities the teacher is thinking of. Such a method could be by humming the rhythm of the word or drawing its stress pattern on the board, the facilitator can help students work out which of several similar words are intended to be obtained from them. In this lesson, mindmaps or spidergrams were used in order to make the students come up with ideas about any topic proposed in the classroom, they could start using the strategy of mind maps to organize their ideas whether they were written or orally. That is why the teacher modeled (Through slides or a powerpoint presentation) how to use mind maps or spidergrams (Taking the trailer of the movie as an example) and provided the learners with specific examples of it using a topic such as “movies” due to the fact they could extract too much information about them.

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

23

The third technique implemented was ‘Scales’. It was primarily focused on eliciting vocabulary and its basic notion was founded on the fact that there are some words that are better understood and learnt in a scale; in the second session for instance, the students were given a set of words about the weather conditions Cold/Cool/Warm/Hot. The teacher could draw a Scale and omit the words the teacher wanted to elicit from the students (E.g. Cold ____ , ____ Hot), the teacher formulated then questions such as “*What do we say about the weather when we have to wear a sweater but it’s not that cold?*” The learners answered “*It’s cool*”.

Comparable to this elicitation technique, “I am drawing a Blank...” was an easy and engaging way to obtain information from the students in a natural conversation, it was based on pretending something have been forgotten and the teacher wanted indeed to remember it with the help of the learners.

In the development of the fourth session, the teacher prepared questions just as ‘*Remember that for Halloween you talked about the costumes you wanted to wear? What was that monster you told me about? The one that turns into a wolf when there’s a full moon?*’ The learner may answer ‘*it is a werewolf*’. Vocabulary was elicited when the facilitator wanted the student to produce a word on their own, either because they were already familiar with it, or it was something previously taught. In this case, the student provided the word the teacher sought.

The last technique was called “asking questions combined with using pictures”. By using images from textbooks or any other resource, the teacher can motivate the students to increase the levels of participation inside the classroom, asking simple questions about what they see in the pictures which leads the students to inquire themselves about the elements displayed. In the development of the fifth lesson, teacher started by showing a collage on the TV through a

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

24

PowerPoint presentation about famous characters around the world such as Juanes, Shakira, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Tom Cruise, Albert Einstein, Gandhi, Matt Damon, Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse and then introduced the vocabulary about personal information of those characters around the world as examples. Teacher asked the students to write down in their notebooks the vocabulary related to describing people such as height , build, hair, eyes, type of complexion and other features as a review since it is a topic already seen in previous years or grades. After remembering the vocabulary to describe physical appearance, the teacher introduced the topic which is Likes and Dislikes by taking as examples people or characters of the same power point Presentations.

5.4 Assessment

In the classroom project “Elicitation techniques to improve Oral participation in EFL classrooms” that will be carried out at Institución educativa Suroriental de Pereira, the students from 7th grade are going to be assessed in agreement with their production, linguistic outcomes and lessons objectives after presenting all content, materials, activities and in line with the formative and summative types of assessment.

The intention of formative assessment is to guide students’ learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. According to the Glossary of Education, “formative assessment refers to a wide variety of methods that teachers use to conduct in-process evaluations of student comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during a lesson, unit, or course”. That is to say that it helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and point areas that need improvement, and so it helps teachers recognize where and when intervene due to students’ struggle in their

learning process. On the other hand the function of the summative type of assessment is to evaluate students' learning at the end of the course or project given the current case. The same Glossary of Education proposes that "summative assessments are used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period".

Both forms of assessments will be considered during the implementation of the project inasmuch as when culminating each lesson, students will be evaluated to provide in process feedback and so at the end of the instructional 5 lessons to gather successful or unsuccessful conclusions regarding the implementation of the elicitation techniques.

5.5 Reflection

To determine the effectiveness of the project, three instruments of data collection will be implemented along the process to provide the information of the conclusions. The first instrument will be a journal which is a record of day by day events; this journal will help the teachers to compile the information regarding the student's performance in the session and the impact of the technique implemented in student's oral participation. In addition, this instrument allows teachers to follow up students on their learning process. The second instrument will be an observation; this instrument is very similar to the first one, the difference is that, observations will be carried out by one of the members of the project, in this case Bryan Estrada, and will be done in every implementation session. This observation will provide an external view of the process carried out with the students by the teacher that will be Valentina Vazquez.

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

26

The third instrument to be implemented will be the student's artifacts which are the linguistic outcomes provided by the students during the whole process and will help as support to determine whether the students achieve the goals proposed in each session.

At the end of the process, the data collected by each instrument will be analyzed to determine the conclusions and the success of the project itself by conclusions of the information gathered.

6-Reflective Stage

Critical reflection can trigger a deeper understanding of teaching. It involves examining teaching experiences as a basis for evaluation and decision making and as a source for change. (Barlett 1990; Wallace 1991). For those reasons, it is an important tool which allows teachers to understand more deeply the students and the progress of the teaching/learning process that takes place into the classroom, and to understand teacher/students' personal philosophies.

Along this section, aspects such as professional growth, students' responses, attitudes and linguistic outcomes during the implementation of the classroom project with students of eighth grade will be discussed.

6.1 Professional growth

Viewing professional growth from a learning perspective forces us to consider seriously the conditions under which teachers learn from and about their teaching (Wildman and Niles, 1987).

Nowadays, language teachers are forced to seek for self-improvement and professional growth.

In order to have a better understanding about the value of these profession aspects such as strengths and challenges must be taken into account.

6.1.1 Strengths

One of the things that teachers feel good at is explaining learners about a new topic, or trying to make themselves understood, because it allows them realize whether the teaching - learning process is going right or wrong depending on students' products or responses. The way students accept or interpret a topic depends significantly on the way the teacher presents it to them.

As a proof of their understanding of a topic, during the implementation of this classroom project, the teacher asked questions at the very end of every explanation to make sure students could get as much information as possible to develop any further activity that required production. If students did not have clear notions of what was being taught, the teacher implemented an elicitation technique such as brainstorming in order to allow students to come up with ideas to convey the message the teacher wanted them to communicate.

Other aspects that were considered strengths regarding classroom management were controlling discipline, giving instructions, voice projection and monitoring activities.

In the first classes with the 8th graders at the “Institucion Educativa Suroriental”, the teacher noticed that they were very undisciplined, were not paying attention to the lesson, did not care about learning English, and were concentrated on their cell phones.

Considering all these factors, a ground rule was established at the beginning of the course: by which cell phones were not permitted, nor headphones. However, despite of it, students kept using their electronic devices during upcoming lessons, what created not only distraction among all learners but noise and disruptive behaviors as well. In response, , the teacher implemented a strategy called “The Box”, and provided a box for students to put in their cell phones in whenever they started using them during the lesson, for different purposes from learning only. This strategy achieved that students stopped grabbing their phones, and payed undivided attention to the lessons.

This experience confirms that establishing ground rules for classroom interactions and discussions can help to promote an inclusive learning environment for all participants, (University of Washington 2009). Besides, it also helped the students to develop awareness on the importance of being focused and involved in classroom activities. Evidence of this awareness can be seen in the notes from the pre-service teachers’ reflective journals:

EVIDENCE.

Something important to highlight in this lesson was that students were more focused than the previous class. There were even some of them that warned the teacher by saying ‘teacher, el cell phone’ and pointing with their fingers to some of the students that were distracted using the cell phone. After that, a student from the class told to the whole group “los celulares están prohibidos, pongan atención”. Surprisingly, after that intervention, the students put their cell phones away and continued paying attention to the class. The teacher did not have to pronounce even a word to change students’ attitude towards the class.

As it can be seen from the evidence, the establishment of a classroom rule did not only achieve a better class behavior in students but also an interesting dynamic of self-regulation in the group, where the students themselves acted as promoters of good behavior in the class.

A second aspect to mention in relation to professional growth was the improvement of our giving instruction technique. Giving clear instructions is a fundamental part of EFL lessons since it is the way teachers provide the guidance to develop the activities in the classroom. According to Cohen and Fass (2001), giving clear instructions through models and examples provides opportunities for students to practice the language, allowing them to carry out in a more appropriate way the activities proposed by the teacher. That is why it is very important to provide simple instructions and to model what is going to be done.

A third strength in relation to professional growth is modelling. Modelling is an instructional strategy in which the teacher demonstrates a new concept or approach to learning where students learn by observing. Eggen and Kauchak (2001). An example of this argument about modeling is evidenced during a video recorded during the implementation of one of the elicitation techniques called “mind maps” when teacher designed a mind map using the information of a popular horror movie which is called “Insidious”. The teacher designed the mind map by pointing out the most important information about the movie such as, characters, genre, and the plot. etc. Then, teacher requested students to make their own mind maps based on the information previously provided. It was noticeable that students designed a well-organized mind map in which they could provide basic and relevant information about a specific topic given to them.

Taken from the reflective journal:

‘Other aspect to highlight was that the teacher was successful at giving instructions and modelling; the use of simple language and true cognates simplified the communication and the interaction with the students and allowed them to understand what he said. Additionally, the teacher provided a model of what students should develop, in this case, a mind map using the information of some famous movies. This allowed students to understand what the requirements were to develop the activity and in this way, they came up with their own mind maps based on the information given by the teacher’.

6.1.2 Challenges

In section, opportunities for the pre-service teachers' improvement will be presented. They include aspects such as time management, disruptive behavior and adapting materials.

To begin with, time management is an aspect of teaching that we found in need of improvement. In the institution where this project was implemented, there were many variables that affected time, and hence the management of class activities.

The English classes were affected by all kinds of interruptions, such as the daily prayer and reflection made by the Principal of the institution and transmitted throughout speakers placed all over the school. This circumstance affected negatively the development of the activities planned due to the difficulties for communicating and focusing on the lesson.

All teachers face a challenge when we talk about scheduling the activities to be developed adequately at certain time during the class. Sometimes, important tasks or activities cannot be fully completed so that there is space for the upcoming ones. One example of this constraint is that of an activity carried out in the first lesson which was supposed to be developed like this:

“Teacher will provide students with random ideas, statements, words, characteristics, characters or true facts about a specific movie but without saying the name of it, and will ask students to guess or say out loud what they think the Movie is about according to the Information T provided previously.

E.g:

Information teacher will provide

First avenger of Marvel.

Action-Science Fiction.

Comics.

Steve Rogers.

Super powerful shield”.

(Captain America) Students will need to guess

Such activity was not developed at all as planned because there were lots of interruptions during the lesson which caused time management issues for the teacher. Instead of the activity explained before, upcoming production activities of the lesson which had more importance were carried out.

Evidence of time management issues taken from the reflective journal

‘By the beginning of this lesson, the class was interrupted as every day in the first hour of class by the daily prayer and reflection of the day, made by the Principal of the school. It lasted between 5 and 8 minutes. Additionally, the constant tardiness of the students to arrive on time to the school, affected the normal development of the lesson in terms of time management, given the fact that the students who came late, constantly knocking at the door or made noise with their chairs while they found a place in the classroom. It is important to say that, there were some other minor issues regarding students’ behaviors that contributed to the waste of time of the lesson’.

In addition to that of time management, unexpected problems such as learners’ disruptive behaviors, and their constant tardiness also affected the lessons.

Disruptive behavior, defined as any behaviors that hamper the ability of instructors to teach or students to learn. (Clayton State University, 1969), can negatively affect the classroom environment as well as the educational experience for students enrolled in the course and should be corrected immediately in order to avoid further confrontations regarding the same issues.

In third place, lesson planning is located in the level of challenges faced during the implementation of the classroom project as will be presented in the following lines.

In terms of lesson planning, it is important to highlight that the use of updated material is crucial when teachers look for engaging students into the lessons. That is to say, that during the implementation teacher should make sure that the materials are closely related to students’ realities so that students may feel the necessity to take part in the activities or to take part of the world by using the language.

Finally, the complexity of language should be in accordance to 8th graders language proficiency level. Every day, EFL teachers face the struggle of adapting not only the materials for the lesson but also the way and the level of the discourse by which they deliver the information to the learners, in this case A1 proficiency level.

6.2 Students' responses

This section will describe the attitudes of the students during the implementation of the project in terms of the strengths and the aspects that need to be improved, understanding attitude as the behavior or the position taken in front of a specific situation, in this case, the lesson.

6.2.1 Strengths

During the implementation process, students started believing in the importance of learning English, showed signs of what worked with them and what did not in terms of learning strategies.

To begin with, it is important to recognize that their English proficiency level was not low compared to that of other students from 8th grade in other public institutions. They may have taken time to understand the meaning of a word, sentence or to answer a question, but that time was granted; they showed good skill at listening and speaking. Although they did not understand every word said because of the level of complexity it may have had, they tried their best, and that is the most important thing to start learning English.

Throughout the sessions students were not strictly requested to produce written language but only to spell out or express their ideas and their responses were accurate. During the implementation most of students were really participative that was the purpose of the implementation.

6.2.2 Challenges

Aspects to improve are constantly required in Language teaching or in any area whether it is academic or non-academic. That is why challenges need to be mentioned in this paper first, regarding the attitudes of the students who were part of the implementation of the classroom project in which some of them got involved in the classes and some others did not. Second, some students did not care about high grades and did not challenge themselves to do better, and third in which students did not like to mix or work collaboratively with the group.

To start with, we would say that the most important challenge was students' disinterest in the class. A few students from the group did not show any interest at all for learning English. They did not want to learn and rather spent their time talking about other things, interrupting the class with jokes about the pronunciation of the teacher or other students, whether it was good or bad. Those few students were the ones having low grades in the quizzes, worksheets or homework assigned given their lack of attention. Regarding to the impact of the students' disinterest for learning, it is important to mention that those kind of attitudes affect the learning process for the lack of students' attention during the explanations and the development of the activities proposed by the teacher along the implementation.

In regards to the first challenge about the implementation of the elicitation techniques developed as documented in the teaching journals, there were some learners who did not disturb the class, they did not make jokes or laugh at other classmates' performance in class activities, but they did not do anything at all. Sometimes it was difficult to know if they learned or if they did not, due to the fact that they did not even say it. Students who did not make themselves part of the class were distracted, demotivated and not interested in what happened around them. There were occasions in which they were developing their homework for subjects different from English, during the English lessons. In the first lesson about the elicitation technique "Mind Maps", they were constantly called out to give their opinions about the movie Fast and Furious or about different films, they knew them but did not want to answer any question. They may have been timid, so it could be argued that it was a challenge for them to become part of the class and overcome their shyness.

Secondly, in terms of 8th graders' attitudes towards English, it was evident from their behavior and performance in class that they felt comfortable getting a "Basic" grade. Getting a "low grade, or "Bajo" was too bad for them, but they were satisfied with a grade of "Básico". It means they settled for little and were not interested in doing better, in challenging themselves and in getting a higher grade.

Finally, having students grouped was not an easy task for a teacher. Sometimes it is necessary to divide the class in small groups to complete certain task. One of the challenges encountered was that some students were reluctant to interact with the rest ; they had created their own divisions since they had problems to get along overcoming their differences in their ways of thinking, the music they liked, their opinions or the topics they talked about and were not accepted or understood by the group. To help learners enhance their willingness to work with different members of the classroom, the facilitator needed to implement grouping strategies. Working in groups implies cooperation among the students, working together as gears of an engine to complete a task or any specific activity requested by the teacher. Those grouping techniques helped students to get involved in tasks that required collaborative work. Groups were formed not by following their desires of working with certain group of people, but by a selection the facilitator made before starting the activities.

6.3 Linguistic Outcomes

Understanding linguistic outcomes as the products students should come up during their learning process of a second language, this section will be dedicated to aspects such as strengths and aspects to improve in terms of production during the implementation of the project.

6.3.1 Strengths

It was observable that the learners of 8th grade at the Institucion Educativa Suroriental had great ability for answering to questions asked in English about topics such as movies, music, sports, and their daily lives. They tried to understand what teacher said by making inferences in relation to words or phrases they have heard before in movies, TV shows and songs. There were few students in the classroom that understood most of what was explained or said in English, those

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

35

were the ones who in one sense “Translated” what teacher said and provoked the rest of the group to answer. Student’s answers were in Spanish but with the teacher’s assistance, they finally learned how to express in English what they really meant

The Elicitation Technique “Mind Maps/Spidergrams” was implemented particularly for the students to organize their ideas first in written language and then to present those orally. Their responses were very asserted and full of meaning for their ideas made sense, their mind maps contained the information, language forms and content that was requested and expected.

Learners had basic notions of question-answer dynamics. They knew when they were being asked things related to a certain topic and they also knew how to answer properly to make themselves understood although the pronunciation or writing was not perfect. They produced a message simple to understand. For such reason it is manifested in this paper that their speaking was their most powerful skill, the one they have worked on the most. Their written answers were also right because of the meaning students intended to give to them, but grammatically incorrect; yet it was a strength that can be straightforward as will be stated in “challenges” below.

Evidence of their linguistic outcomes written and orally can be drafted from the observations/teaching journal about the several activities carried out in different stages of the lessons. For example during the introduction of the topic of every class when they were encouraged to make inferences or produce information about what the lessons were going to be about, during the practice when they were required to perform orally or in a written manner what was previously taught, and so during the last stage of every lesson which is production, they came up with their own ideas, inferences, or opinions. Their assumptions, conjectures or interpretations were considered as the expected linguistic outcomes which were given thanks to the elicitation technique implemented.

Extracted from the reflective teaching journal:

Students were working calm but at the same time, they were very excited given the fact that the topic of famous characters was very interesting for them and they participated actively while the teacher delivered the information. Additionally, students showed great comprehension about the

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

36

questions made by the teacher along the lesson. Although they understand what the teacher asked or requested, their answers were in Spanish most of the time.

An example of this question-answer dynamics can be evidenced in the next moment of the class when:

-Teacher asks: "Where is Shakira from?"

-Students answer: "She is from Barranquilla"

6.3.2 Challenges

A challenge is an opportunity for improvement that is why those opportunities will be mentioned in the following section in regards to L2 oral production, and to commitment with delivering their homework.

To begin with, the majority of the students understood what they were told or asked, but it was challenging for them to produce language or answer in L2. The elicitation techniques implemented with the purpose of making them infer about a topic or question worked. We can affirm that in view of the fact that students did produce language, made their guesses, and intended to express their ideas but in Spanish, not in English as it was pretended. An example of what was said in the previous lines can be drafted from a fragment of the teaching journal/observations during the implementation as it is seen below.

Taken from the reflective teaching journal.

'It is important to highlight that students showed great comprehension of the questions made by the teacher and her commands. However, the majority of the responses given by the students were in their L1'.

An example of this can be evidenced in the next moment of the classes when:

-Teacher asks: "What is the name of this guy?" (Referring and pointing at a picture of the main character of the movie impossible mission)

-Students' answer: "el man de misión imposible".

-Teacher says: "What can you tell me about Shakira"

ELICITATION TECHNIQUES FOCUSING ON PARTICIPATION IN EFL.

37

-Students say: *“Que ella baila muy bien”, “Mueve las caderas muy bien”*

The fact that they could not produce the expected language (in L2) at this very moment of their learning did not worry us since, according to theory there is a need for all students of any language to pass through a silent period during their learning process even in L1. The British Council (2006) confirms the silent period hypothesis and states that when a language is learned, there should be a period in which the learner is not expected to actively produce any language.

Finally, it must be acknowledged as a challenge students' reluctance to submit homework, activities or tasks proposed and requested in class. For this reason evidence of production could not be always collected for learning to be measured.

7-Conclusion

All in all, it is important to highlight that the techniques used in this classroom project did not work by themselves; to such a degree, there is a strict need of relation among the content selected for the lesson and students' daily lives. Thus, it is recommendable to conduct a needs analysis the first day of class in order to identify the needs but also the students' interest toward their own learning process.

Needs analysis provides teachers with a general view of what the students need in order to have an initial point for the learning process and to plan lessons based on students' interests. This facilitates the engagement of the students into the lesson.

Lesson planning is extremely important given the fact that, it provides the sequence in which the lesson should be developed but also, is the manner of keeping track among lessons. Planning ensures that lessons get a balanced mixture of different materials, content and interactions types. Respecting the implementation of elicitation techniques, it needs to be mentioned that they undoubtedly work in a positive way when making students participate during English lessons by means of using different kind of activities to introduce unknown vocabulary or topics to the students.

It is also important to highlight that elicitation techniques not only bring about oral production but also written production after receiving certain input while reading or listening activities considering it is also known that teachers are eliciting all the time about everything and learners respond to all they see or listen. However, it must be acknowledge that even if elicitation techniques achieved an increase in students' participation in class activities, the fact that they answered the teacher's questions in Spanish instead of doing it in English raises the concern about the usefulness of these techniques to enhance oral participation in the L2 in the classroom.

8-References

Abdel, S. (2006). The Effectiveness of a Task- Based Instruction program in Developing the English Language Speaking Skills of Secondary Stage Students El Cairo: Ain Shams University. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/28704526/The_Effectiveness_of_a_Task-Based_Instruction_program_in_Developing_the_English_Language_Speaking_Skills_of_Secondary_Stage_Students

Assessing in-class participation for EFL: *Considerations of effectiveness and fairness for different learning styles*. Retrieved from, <https://languagetestingasia.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40468-015-0017-1>

Peter, R. Daniel, R. and Ashley, M. (2015) Assessing in-class participation for EFL: *Considerations of effectiveness and fairness for different learning styles*. (Research). Retrieved from <https://languagetestingasia.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40468-015-0017-1>

Anne, B. Hellen, J. (1997). *Focus on Speaking*. National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research. (Masters' Diploma Thesis). Retrieved from https://is.muni.cz/th/329367/ff_m/THESIS_Solcova_text.pdf

Caicedo, J. (2015). *Teacher activities and adolescent students' participation in a Colombian EFL classroom*. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 17(2), 149-163. Retrieved from <https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/48091>

Case, A. (2009) The advantages and disadvantages of eliciting in the EFL classroom. Retrieved from <https://www.usingenglish.com/articles/advantages-disadvantages-eliciting-in-efl-classroom.html>

University of Waterloo (2013) Promoting effective classroom participation. Centre for teaching Excellence. Retrieved from, <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/assessing-student-work/grading-and-feedback/promoting-effective-participation>

Brown, D.H. (2006). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Fifth edition. United States. Pearson Longman.

Kirkwood, M.A. (1989). *Spoken And Written Language*. Oxford University Press, London.

Brookfield, S.D. & Preskill, S. (2005). *Discussion as a Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms (2nd ed.)* San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass

Sellars, M. (2017) *Reflective Practice For Teachers*. 2nd Edition. United Kingdom, SAGE Publishing.

University of Washington, (2009). Establishing Classroom Ground Rules. <https://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/resources/inclusive-teaching-learning/establishing-ground-rules/>

Mendoza, L. (2007). *The study that affects oral participation in students of 6th Grade at Maria Auxiliadora school in Sahagún Córdoba*. (Master in education). Retrieved from <http://manglar.uninorte.edu.co/bitstream/handle/10584/702/25872147.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Stevens, J. Lasso, H. Quintero, J. (2012). *Speaking activities and pedagogical strategies to promote oral participation among fifth grade introverted students*. (undergraduate programme thesis). Retrieved from <http://recursosbiblioteca.utp.edu.co/tesis/textoyanexos/3022242S844.pdf>